

to the credit of the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Security Council imposed modest sanctions on the Iranians about a year ago, and there is some evidence that these sanctions are beginning to work.

The United States sanctions, which were led by then-ranking member ROS-LEHTINEN and now chairwoman, and by then-Chairman BERMAN, now ranking member, and frankly that relied upon the work of Senator KIRK in the Senate, focused on a gasoline embargo. It's an odd fact, but Iran, which is a country which exports crude oil, imports about 40 percent of its gasoline because its economy is so dysfunctional that it cannot refine its own products. Before the U.S. sanctions were imposed, the price of a gallon of gasoline heavily subsidized in Iran was 38 cents a gallon. Today it's \$1.58 a gallon.

Now what does this mean? It means that an Iranian citizen who used to have to work 1 hour to fill their gas tank once a week now has to work 5 hours to fill their gas tank once a week. This is not a huge sacrifice, but it's making a dent in the economy of Iran.

It is our intention, obviously, not to in any way punish or jeopardize the well-being of the Iranian people. They are our friends, and we want them to be our friends and allies for years to come. But the simple, and I think compelling, logic of these sanctions is we are compelling the Iranian leadership to choose between pursuing their nuclear weapons ambitions but suffering economic consequences or abandoning those nuclear weapons ambitions and having the opportunity to restore their economy to some basic degree of health.

By the way, at a time when crude oil prices were rising, the Iranian economy stagnated. They had a negative growth of 1 percent last year, and they had stagnant growth the year before that. So at a time when they should have been enjoying robust economic growth because of rising crude oil prices, they were stagnant because of the effectiveness of these sanctions.

Perhaps the best evidence of effectiveness was from President Ahmadinejad himself, who this week stood before their parliament defending a cabinet member of his who is accused of some wrongdoing and said that one of the reasons why they had to engage in the wrongdoing was their economy was in bad shape because "we can't do international banking transactions anymore." Well, there's some good news.

What I'm suggesting here is that the House should move rapidly to embrace and support the legislation that the Foreign Relations Committee marked up yesterday. And I think that legislation will enjoy broad Republican and Democratic support, as it did yesterday. I believe it was approved unanimously by the committee. I would then urge our administration to work with the Congress and sign such legislation and implement it.

Now, listen, Madam Speaker, I fully understand that sanctions alone may not be sufficient. And I'm not here today to argue for that proposition. What I am here today to argue for is the proposition that the sanctions we have imposed thus far have shown some signs of success. I think this is the time to intensify those sanctions, not to weaken them. I think this is a time for us to intensify our unified national resolve on this question. And despite our very profound differences on matters of economics and social policy, which is what a democracy ought to have, there should be no difference between us on the question of standing in a unified fashion in favor of more intense sanctions against Iran. The need is urgent and compelling.

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You know, Madam Speaker, if someone had stood in this Chamber in the mid-1990s and said, If we don't focus our intelligence efforts on an obscure group of former mujahedin rebels in Afghanistan called al Qaeda, if we don't do that, the day may come when we will have a domestic Pearl Harbor, when the World Trade Centers will collapse, when thousands of people will perish, when the Pentagon, our own air space, will be attacked by civilians in our country, I think one would have thought that the Member was auditioning for a Tom Clancy film. It would sound very fantastic, very unlikely, and almost like science fiction or a spy thriller.

I wish September 11, 2001, had been fiction—I wish. That we had not had to go to those funerals and comfort those families who suffer today, I wish that were the fact. And there will be some who will say that the scenario we talked about earlier, about a nuclear IED exploding in Times Square or the National Mall or an NFL football game, is too provocative or too sensational or too scary. I hope they're absolutely right; I hope it's total fiction.

But I think we ought to know better. I think we ought to know better that there is a regime which has demonstrated its deceit, which has manifested its evil toward its own people and to our troops in the Middle East, that has used language that is more than just purple language, that is language that goes beyond the pale about the annihilation of Israel and of all those who would stand with Israel, and that now stands accused—or persons alleged to have been tied to that regime now stand accused in our courts of participating in a conspiracy to assassinate a foreign diplomat on our soil. These are people we should be concerned about.

And as we look at the question of whether such an attack could happen, I think the question is unequivocally: Yes, it can. Our responsibility is to, with equal equivocation, say, no, it won't, no, it won't; that we will use the resources at our disposal—our international alliances, our economic lever-

age, our diplomatic skill—to try to move the Iranians to the point where they would accept a reasonable deal which says if you want to have nuclear power plants in your country, that's your sovereign right; but you must buy your fuel from outside the country and you must abandon your ability to manufacture and synthesize fuel. That's a reasonable and fair settlement. We should use every tool at our disposal to encourage the Iranian Government to accept such a settlement.

And as any wise President should do, as President Obama has done, as President Bush did before him, as President Clinton did before him, as President Bush did before him, as Presidents Reagan and Carter did before them, any prudent American President must reserve the right to defend our sovereign interests with whatever tools are necessary should the need arise. I pray that the need will never arise. And I think if we act intelligently, forcefully, but urgently, I think that we can avoid that day and avoid a situation like I described earlier.

So, Madam Speaker, thank you for this time this afternoon. I'd like to again thank the staff for its indulgence. I commend the chairwoman of our committee and the ranking member. And I look forward to supporting their legislation, broadening our unified, bipartisan national effort to stand strong against the tyranny and evil of this regime and for the welfare of innocent people throughout the world and throughout our country.

I yield back the balance of my time.

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.J. RES. 2

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I request that my name be removed as a sponsor to H.J. Res. 2.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here on the floor to hear my friend from New Jersey's comments, very well thought through. And I feel sure we can find some commonality in our concerns and appreciate the man's heart and mind. Thank you.

One of the things under the debt ceiling act that was passed early August was a requirement for a vote on a balanced budget amendment. There are different versions of a balanced budget amendment. One has most of the things we hold dear, not only a requirement of balancing the budget, but also